United Nations S/2017/568

Security Council

Distr.: General
3 July 2017
English
Original: Spanish

Letter dated 30 June 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to write to you regarding the agenda item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security: comprehensive approach to mine action and explosive hazard threat mitigation", which was considered by the Security Council at its 7966th meeting on Tuesday, 13 June 2017.

The Government of the Argentine Republic wishes to exercise its right of reply with regard to the statement made by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in relation to the Malvinas Islands on that occasion.

In that regard, the Argentine Republic reiterates the particular situation of the Malvinas Islands, in accordance with the contents of the interpretative declaration it made at the time of its ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Convention) on 14 September 1999. To date, that declaration has not been amended, and it constitutes the main basis of the extension granted to Argentina for the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas in accordance with article 5.1 of the Convention.

The Malvinas Islands are the only part of Argentine territory that is affected by anti-personnel mines, but Argentina is prevented from gaining access to those mines in order to comply with its obligations under the Convention, given that the territory, together with the South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, is illegally occupied by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and is the subject of a sovereignty dispute.

Indeed, the General Assembly has recognized the existence of a dispute between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, and has urged the two Governments to resume negotiations in order to find a peaceful and definitive solution to the dispute as soon as possible.

The Special Committee on decolonization has expressed the same opinion in its yearly resolution, in which it states that the way to put an end to the dispute is through negotiations between the two parties. The most recent of these resolutions was adopted on 23 June 2017.

Please recycle

When making its extension request, on 1 October 2009, Argentina submitted a schematic plan for implementing article 5 of the Ottawa Convention in the disputed areas over the 10 years of the extension, in the event that the negotiations on sovereignty between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom were to resume and, within this framework, both countries were to reach an agreement on the clearance of anti-personnel mines (including unexploded ordnance).

The Argentine Republic reaffirms its rights of sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which are an integral part of its national territory.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council, in connection with the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security".

(*Signed*) Martin **García Moritán**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative